

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

FORT COLLINS CITY COUNCIL

ITEM NUMBER: 21

DATE: March 21, 2006

STAFF: Greg Byrne
Kathy Collier

SUBJECT

Resolution 2006-037 Authorizing and Directing the City Manager to Join the Efforts of Colorado State University, the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation, the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce, Poudre School District, Larimer County, and Private Enterprise in Developing a Clean Energy Cluster for Northern Colorado.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of this Resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Resolution authorizes and directs the City Manager to proceed on behalf of the City to participate in a Clean Energy Cluster formation and development, and to work with Colorado State University, Larimer County, Poudre School District, the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation, the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce, and local business entities to develop the Cluster's strategic plan and to support the advancement of the plan as it is implemented.

BACKGROUND

The proposed Clean Energy Cluster is an interrelated group of businesses and organizations focused in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, solar and wind energy, green building, fuel cells and other technologies with enough participants to attract outside economies.

In 2004, the Fort Collins Economic Vitality and Sustainability Group (EVSAG) recommended that certain business clusters be investigated as economic development strategies, naming several potential clusters under the umbrella of CLEAN ENERGY, including solar and wind energy, efficient energy technology, green building and energy utilization.

In 2005, the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation (NCEDC) hosted a focus group meeting of academic and business leaders in the clean energy field to explore the strength of the region's current assets in clean energy and gain advice on how to best advance the cluster. Focus group attendees agreed the region can support a strong cluster through:

- a progressive municipal-owned utility
- world class clean energy research programs at Colorado State University
- users employing clean energy technologies
- a highly trained workforce
- national recognition for innovation and entrepreneurship, among others.

As a result of the focus group, NCEDC, the Chamber, Colorado State University, Poudre School District, the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County and several Fort Collins businesses developing or adopting clean energy technologies are moving forward with an industry-led initiative facilitated by The Brendle Group, culminating in a written "Strategic Plan for Advancing Northern Colorado's Clean Energy Cluster".

RESOLUTION 2006-037
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS
AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO JOIN THE
EFFORTS OF COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY, THE NORTHERN
COLORADO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, THE FORT
COLLINS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, POUFRE SCHOOL DISTRICT,
LARIMER COUNTY AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE IN DEVELOPING A
CLEAN ENERGY CLUSTER FOR NORTHERN COLORADO

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Collins (the "City") is dedicated to the improvement of the natural environment through continuing efforts to promote clean and renewable energy sources; and

WHEREAS, the strong working relationship between the City and Colorado State University ("CSU") provides an outstanding collaborative setting within which these two public entities can work together for the betterment of the environment and for an economically stable economy for the community and the region; and

WHEREAS, CSU has already gained international recognition for its research and development of cleaner engines, solar energy production, networked distributed energy, wind engineering and atmospheric sciences, and for its commitment to regional economic development that will have a global impact; and

WHEREAS, other regional public institutions such as Platte River Power Authority, Western Area Power Administration, Colorado Renewable Energy Society and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory have also exhibited nationally leading energy policies in such areas as solar energy, wind energy, biodiesel fuels, and geothermal heating; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Colorado, through Executive Order D 005 05, has directed a statewide initiative to order the greening of state government in Colorado, demonstrating a statewide commitment to reducing energy use in Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the Poudre School District has demonstrated a continuing commitment to energy reduction and healthy environments in nationally recognized schools such as Fossil Ridge High School, Bacon Elementary, Zach Elementary, and Kinard Junior High School; and

WHEREAS, private companies in Fort Collins and northern Colorado are also providing new research and development in clean and alternative energy sources; and

WHEREAS, the City was selected recently by the Sierra Club in 2005 as one of the four leading cities in the United States in the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, Fort Collins has a highly educated workforce capable of providing an intelligence pool of highly capable researchers able to enhance existing clean energy technologies and develop new clean energy strategies and products; and

WHEREAS, the City, CSU and private enterprise want to attract the best and brightest individuals to develop new and emerging clean and renewable energy technologies; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the City and Larimer County to develop primary employment that is economically stable; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the nation as a whole to develop clean and renewable energy sources; and

WHEREAS, nationwide attention is being paid to the concept of industry "clustering" as a means of furthering the economic health of local communities; and

WHEREAS, the clustering of related industries calls for a high degree of collaboration among individual businesses and public entities in the development, design, production, transfer of information and marketing of a particular kind of product in a single geographic location, on the theory that such entities can better further their industry objectives through such close interaction and collaboration; and

WHEREAS, the independent efforts of various public and private entities in the Northern Colorado region to advance commerce in the fields of renewable energy, energy efficiency, solar and wind energy, green building, fuel cells and other technologies make the region an ideal location for a "Clean Energy Cluster" that could attract additional economic activity and participation from outside the region ; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation and the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce believe that Fort Collins and the Northern Colorado region have the attributes to foster a Clean Energy Cluster that will create new opportunities for primary employment; and

WHEREAS, an industry cluster focused on clean energy would also enable the City and the region to better advance their respective clean air goals and could attract state and federal funding to facilitate the further development of additional clean energy sources, much to the benefit of the region and the nation.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to participate on behalf of the City in the formation and development of a Clean Energy Cluster by working with Colorado State University, Larimer County, Poudre School District, the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation, the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce, and local business entities to develop a Clean Energy Cluster strategic plan, and to support the advancement of such plan as it is implemented.

Passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Fort Collins this 21st day of March, A.D. 2006.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk